

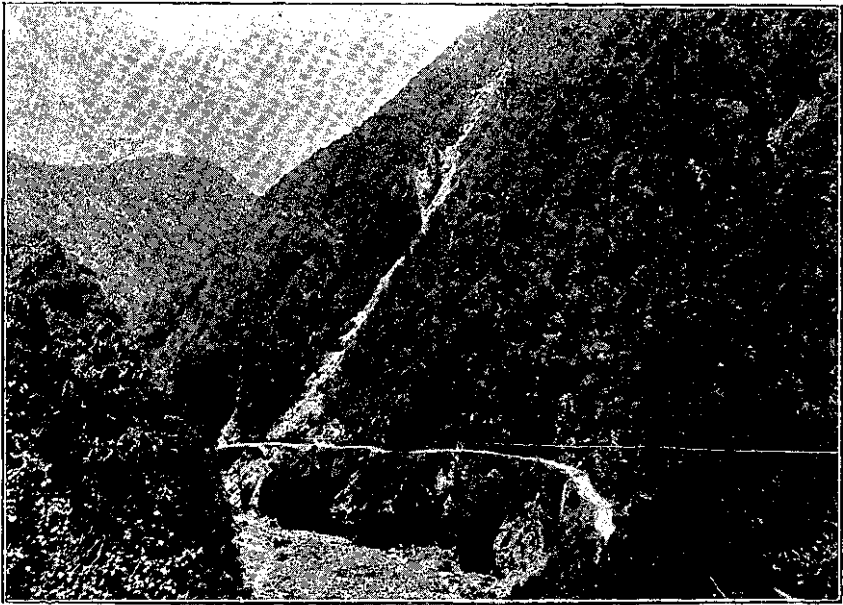
boulder an insecure resting place, and thereafter counted "baptism by immersion" among their manifold experiences.

At the top of Arthur's Pass the mountain lillies were in full bloom, and we were only sorry that we could not preserve specimens of these to the end of our journey.

We had now reached the dividing line between Canterbury and Westland, and were soon making our way towards the wonderful Otira Gorge. Up to this time the weather had been perfect, but now rain began to fall, and we made

ing a new view of the Gorge—words fail to give any idea of the wonderful beauty of the scene.

Finding no shelter at the foot of the Gorge, we determined to cross the river and go on another mile or two. Here, to my amazement, we heard the whistle of a locomotive, and found we had come once more to civilization in the shape of a railway-station. Otira, we discovered, was the terminus for the time of the railway from Greymouth. Close to the station we camped, and were amused to see goats trotting here and there.



Wheeler & Son, photo,

The Otira Gorge.

Christchurch.

the acquaintance of the Otira swathed in a misty vapour. Most of us descended the Gorge on foot, and even through the rain we could appreciate its loveliness. A deep and winding cleft—a rushing torrent below—on either side high, natural walls, covered for the most part with luxuriant vegetation—ferns and mosses nestling in the crevices, and numerous native trees growing wherever they could find a lodgment—bubbling streams running down to join the deeper torrent—every turn of the road bring-

These were kept by the few settlers—most of whom were connected with the railway works—for here was no pasture land on which cows could graze.

The queer-looking tent-houses, with iron or wooden chimneys, were curiosities to several of us. We found, on making a closer acquaintance, that these houses could be made, and were often made, very comfortable. People were very kind to us, one gentleman in particular, hearing that many of us were very wet, invited us to his